

lockmaster or lockman is needed there the civil service commission appoints him. A notice is put up in the post offices and along the canal, intimating that there is a vacancy; applications are made to the civil service commission and they make the appointment. I am not arguing now either for or against the wisdom of this method, but I would ask the minister why he thinks there should be any difference between the method followed in appointing engineers, clerks and so on in connection with these harbours and the method in connection with canals, which he will also be administering.

Mr. HOWE: My hon. friend is an experienced business man. I would ask him to go back over his business experience and ask himself whether he would recommend the civil service commission as the proper agency in appointing men in connection with the various businesses of the ports—the grain elevator business, the cold storage business, the wharf and warehouse business, the terminal railway business, stevedoring and so on—or whether he would not consider it best to leave such appointments to the business heads of enormous undertakings of this kind, allowing them to keep the personnel up to the mark by giving them the power of dismissal for wrong-doing.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: The minister makes a fair argument, and in a business I might be administering I should certainly wish to control the appointments myself. But if he were administering the business of an elevator he would not have a member of parliament coming to him and saying that he wanted certain people appointed; the minister would have that in his own hands. The point I am making is this: Is there not any way in which he can improve the position as far as patronage is concerned, with respect to the people who will work for the board, because pressure will be there exactly the same as it has been? I understood from what the minister said previously that his purpose in bringing down this legislation was to try to better the condition of affairs in the harbours and to see that patronage was eliminated as much as possible.

Mr. CAHAN: "Change the system" were the words.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: Yes, change the system in order to eliminate patronage, and try to have this business conducted as the minister would conduct it if it were his own private concern.

Mr. FINN: I am surprised at hon. gentlemen opposite. Every hon. member knows that the Gibb report was in the hands of the [Sir George Perley.]

previous government—and I regret that the right hon. leader of the opposition is not in his seat at the moment—and that the report was pigeonholed so that it did not see the light of day until the present administration came into office. I desire to say to my hon. friends opposite and particularly to the ex-Secretary of State (Mr. Cahan), who comes from my own province, that the harbour commissions were established in 1928, and in 1930 we had an election. The Liberal party went out of office; the Conservative party came in, and the late government, led by the present right hon. leader of the opposition, dismissed every employee of the Halifax harbour commission, from engineers down to the men who swept the docks, with the exception of three or four employees.

Mr. ST-PERE: The situation was the same in Montreal.

Mr. FINN: The chairman of the Halifax board was a gentleman whom the ex-Secretary of State knows very well, but during the five years hon. gentlemen opposite were in office they did not dare to bring down legislation implementing the Gibb report. Prior to the election of 1935 all employees of the Halifax harbour commission, from the chairman down to the humblest employee, were told what they had to do. They went out and worked for the Conservative party and did all they could to defeat my colleague and myself. Hon. gentlemen opposite speak of patronage. They had it for five years and their party grew rich because of it. If I wished to make some other statements to this committee this afternoon I think some other hon. gentlemen who sit opposite would be out of the house just now, as the right hon. leader of the opposition is.

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. I do not think the hon. member has any right to refer to any other hon. member in the terms he has used, or to make the suggestions he has made. I would ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw his last statement.

Mr. FINN: I simply said what I meant, Mr. Chairman, and I reiterate it, that when this—

Mr. WALSH: I raised a point of order, Mr. Chairman, and I ask for your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Johnston, Lake Centre): I would ask my hon. friend to state first the point of order.

Mr. WALSH: The hon. member stated that if he cared to make statements which he knew to be true some other hon. members